

**Seattle Department of Transportation
Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP)
Parking Research: Preliminary Report on Demand
February 24, 2005**

The Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP) uses City policies applicable to Northgate as a framework for addressing the anticipated impacts of growth on the neighborhood's transportation system. CTIP is evaluating local parking supply and demand, and will identify strategies to address those impacts. This report provides information on parking demand associated with multi-family households, particularly for households close to transit service, which is timely for the Northgate Stakeholders' discussions of proposals for the South Lot.

Summary of Parking Demand Data

The U.S. Census and the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) collect data related to parking demand. The Census provides information on the number of vehicles available to different types of households (single-family, multi-family, etc.). The number of vehicles available to a household roughly correlates to its parking demand. ITE collects average parking demand data for a variety of different urban and suburban land uses throughout the country.

- The 2000 Census data shows that the average multi-family household in Seattle has access to .80 vehicles. In northeast Seattle (the area bounded by I-5, the Ship Canal, Lake Washington and Shoreline), the average multi-family household has access to .87 vehicles and 29% of multi-family households do not have a vehicle at all.
- New ITE parking information for low to mid-rise apartments in non-downtown urban settings reports average demand of 1.00 vehicles per multi-family dwelling unit.

Transit Proximity Demand

SDOT has also reviewed recent studies conducted in cities similar to Seattle in Canada and California. These studies generally conclude that households located close to transit use it more than other households. A related finding is that these households own fewer cars, thus reducing the demand for parking spaces. For example, a CalTrans Parking & Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Special Report (2000) found that parking requirements for rental units in TODs could be reduced by as much as 23% because of this lower demand.

Reflecting this lower demand, there is a growing tendency among cities with rail systems or strong transit networks to reduce parking requirements. SDOT's research has identified a range of reductions from 20% to 100%. Examples include:

- **Springfield, OR. Developments are eligible for up to a 20% parking reduction if they demonstrate the reduction is justified.** Springfield's mixed-use ordinance permits a 20% reduction in the required number of parking spaces. The reduction is based on a parking generation study that demonstrates how a "proposal to reduce parking is justified by estimated peak use, easy pedestrian access, availability of transit service, and adjacent on-street parking."
- **San Diego, CA. Residential parking requirements are reduced by .25 spaces per dwelling unit for housing in the Transit Area Overlay Zone.** The purpose of the Transit Area Overlay Zone is to "provide supplemental parking regulations for areas receiving a high level of transit service. The intent is to identify areas with reduced parking demand and to lower off-street parking requirements accordingly."
- **Oakland, CA. Residential parking requirements are reduced to 0.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit within the TOD zone.** The purpose of the Transit-Oriented Development Zone is to "create, preserve and enhance areas with multiple nodes of transportation and encourage a balance of pedestrian-oriented activities, transit opportunities and concentrated high-density residential, commercial and mixed-use developments."
- **Portland, OR. There are no minimum commercial or residential parking requirements for sites well-served by transit.** This applies to developments located less than 500 feet from a transit street with 20-minute peak hour service.

The City of Seattle provides a 20% reduction in parking requirements for commercial developments. The reduction is given to developments located within 800 feet of a street with peak period transit service headways of 15 minutes or less.

Next Steps

Additional information on parking topics will be presented throughout the CTIP process as Seattle Department of Transportation staff continue research and analysis of Northgate parking demand and supply.

Additional Information

If you have any questions, please contact Meghan Shepard, Seattle Department of Transportation, meghan.shepard@seattle.gov or 206.684.4208.